the GIVER: *a LOVE story COME LET US ADORE HIM*

John 3:16a, "For here is the way God loved the world—He gave His only, unique Son as a *gift.* (TPT)

Weeks ago, I began making lists. Checking them twice, ya know, and five times even. I am proficient this year as I now make lists on my phone, so I simply erase items when they are too expensive or sold out...or silly. Unlike some years when pads of paper bear the sad scratchings and eraser marks of a constantly changing mind. I pride myself in my gift-giving abilities. I like to give the perfect gift. The one that no one suspects, because they didn't know eleven or six months ago, I was paying attention, silently scribbling notes in my head when someone voiced a need or a want. I love the surprise that crosses a face, fills the eyes, falls from a mouth, creating a priceless memory far beyond the cost of the gift.

On the other hand, I don't like receiving gifts. I don't know why, but I'd rather disappear. I have a hard time expressing how gracious I feel someone just was to me; how grateful I am for what someone else spent on me: the time, the kind thought, let alone the money. Could you imagine the hurt to the giver if I set the gift in a place where I could see it, ponder over it, pass by it with curiosity, but because of my inability to accept the kindness behind it, I hadn't the humility to ever open it?!

I think, God too loves giving the perfect gift! That's what He did! He gave! His one and only unique Son. As a gift. The perfect gift. Who was given to bring freedom during captivity, hope in desperation, forgiveness and second chances, peace in crisis, the Answer in lostness. His gift made Him the Giver of grace when the penalty called instead for death rather than life. God gave the perfect gift to you and to me.

But like me, too many of us place the gift just beyond our reach. We pass by it often. We ponder it frequently. We are curious what is inside and if the contents and depth of the gift could really make a difference and be of good benefit for us. But, for so many reasons, we leave it there, unopened, untapped, unused, unappreciated, unknown, wasting its contents and squandering what the Giver truly intended its purpose to produce in our lives.

I know, this year, and next, and even the next, the Giver will still place His gift to all mankind before each of us. His Spirit will nudge us toward His Son Jesus, the One Who came centuries ago as a baby and grew to live the life of a sinless man so He could be the unblemished sacrifice for you and for me. The Giver will cause us to reflect during this time of year what the value is of the gift He gave and what its meaning is for our lives. He will bring us to look deep inside, to uncover our vast need for a Savior, and then, and only then, might we open the Gift He gave, to discover a love so intense and deep that it is life-changing; so fulfilling, it stands alone. The Gift is meant to be used, enjoyed, allowed to flourish in our lives. Then, we can experience a celebration of its depth and joy for the value it extends. Because love and its Giver never stops loving.

Come! Let us adore Him for what He has given to us.

1 Cor. 13:6 'Love joyfully celebrates honesty and finds no delight in what is wrong.' (TPT)